

Remarks

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action of May 13, 2011, in which claims 1-7 are pending, claims 2-3 are withdrawn from consideration and claims 1 and 4-7 are rejected. Favorable further consideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks and above amendments.

Claim 1 was amended to recite additional elements, support for which may be found, for example, in Figs. 33-40. No new matter was added.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite as reciting “blood may flow through the filtering membrane.” With this response, the offending language was deleted, obviating the rejection.

Claims 1 and 4-6 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Lesh, USPN 6,152,144. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Lesh does not teach a filtering membrane as claimed. Claim 1 recites “the filtering membrane having a central section and a perimeter section disposed around the central section, the perimeter section disposed circumferentially around an end of the support structure and extending along a portion of the support structure.” In contrast, Lesh teaches embodiments wherein the support structure is disposed circumferentially about the filtering membrane and the filtering membrane does not extend radially beyond the frame. See, for example, Figs. 3 and 6 of Lesh.

For at least this reason, applicants submit that Lesh does not anticipate claims 1 and 4-6 and that these claims are accordingly in condition for allowance over Lesh.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Lesh in view of Bates and claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Lesh. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Bates is cited for teaching a filter having pores of preferably about 30 microns, but does not appear to remedy the deficiencies in Lesh discussed above. Applicants

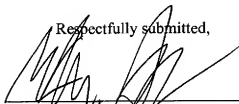
therefore submit that claim 1 is allowable over Lesh in view of Bates and claim 7 is allowable over Lesh.

In view of the foregoing, all pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Further examination, reconsideration, and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is anticipated. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

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Respectfully submitted,



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